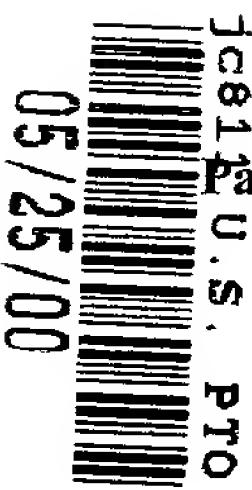


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85-26-00

NEW UNITED STATES UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION

under 37 C.F.R. 1.53(b)



Page 1

Atty. Docket No. 10968.86881

jc530 U.S. PTO
09/579404



CERTIFICATE OF EXPRESS MAILING UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.10: The undersigned hereby certifies that this United States Patent Application and all papers noted herein as being attached, are being deposited with the United States Postal Service "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" Service under 37 C.F.R. § 1.10 today, **May 25, 2000**, and is addressed to: Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.

Express Mail Label No.: EL550053061US

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Box Patent Applications
Washington, D.C. 20231

Enclosed herewith is a new patent application and the following papers:

First Named Inventor (or application identifier): Robert J. Mehmen

Title of Invention: Drawer Latch

1. Specification 13 pages (including specification, claims, abstract) / 7 claims (1 independent)
2. Declaration/Power of Attorney is:
 - attached in the regular manner.
 - NOT included, but deferred under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(f).
3. 4 Distinct sheets of Formal Informal Drawings
4. Preliminary Amendment.
5. Information Disclosure Statement
 - Form 1449
 - A copy of each cited prior art reference
6. Assignment with Cover Sheet.
7. Priority is hereby claimed under 35 U.S.C. § 119 based upon the following application(s):

Country	Application Number	Date of Filing (day, month, year)

NEW UNITED STATES UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION
under 37 C.F.R. 1.53(b)

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Atty. Docket No. 10968.86881

8. Priority document(s).
9. Statement Claiming Small Entity Status.
10. Microfiche Computer Program (Appendix).
11. Nucleotide and/or Amino Acid Sequence Submission.
 - Computer Readable Copy.
 - Paper Copy (identical to computer copy).
 - Statement verifying identity of above copies.

12. Calculation of Fees:

FEES FOR	EXCESS CLAIMS	FEE	AMOUNT DUE
Basic Filing Fee (37 C.F.R. § 1.16(a))			\$690.00
Total Claims in Excess of 20 (37 C.F.R. § 1.16(c))	0	18.00	\$0.00
Independent Claims in Excess of 3 (37 C.F.R. § 1.16(b))	0	78.00	\$0.00
Multiple Dependent Claims (37 C.F.R. § 1.16(d))	0	260.00	\$0.00
Subtotal - Filing Fee Due			\$690.00
	MULTIPLY BY		
Reduction by 50%, if Small Entity (37 C.F.R. §§ 1.9, 1.27, 1.28)	0		\$0.00
TOTAL FILING FEE DUE			\$690.00
Assignment Recordation Fee (if applicable) (37 C.F.R. § 1.21(h))	0	40.00	\$0.00
GRAND TOTAL DUE			\$690.00

13. PAYMENT is:

- included in the amount of the GRAND TOTAL by our enclosed check. A general authorization under 37 C.F.R. § 1.25(b), second sentence, is hereby given to credit or debit our Deposit Account No. 01-0850 for the instant filing and for any other fees during the pendency of this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16, 1.17 and 1.18.
- not included, but deferred under 37 C.F.R. § 1.53(f).

NEW UNITED STATES UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION
under 37 C.F.R. 1.53(b)

Page 3

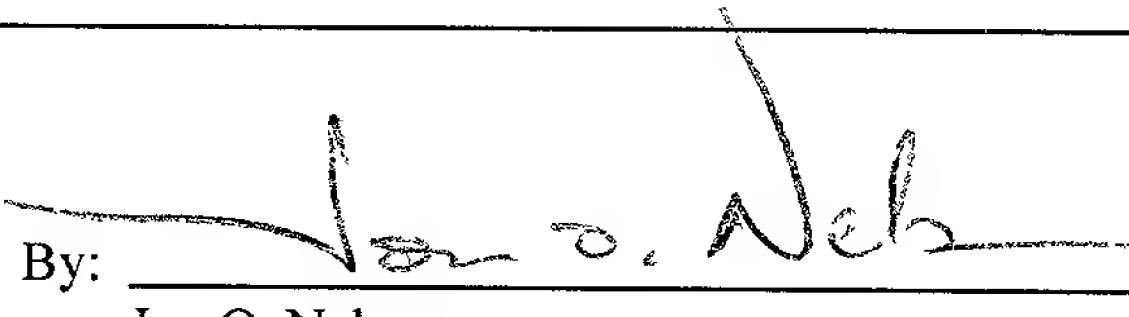
Atty. Docket No. 10968.86881

14. All correspondence for the attached application should be directed to:

Banner & Witcoff, Ltd.
Ten South Wacker Drive, Suite 3000
Chicago, IL 60606-7407
Telephone: (312) 715-1000
Facsimile: (312) 715-1234

15. Other: _____

Date: May 25, 2000

By: 

Jon O. Nelson
Reg. No. 24,566

JON:dal

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

(PATENT)

Express Mail No. EL550053061US

Deposited May 25, 2000

I hereby certify that the attached correspondence, identified below, is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as "Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and is addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for Patents, Box Patent Applications, Washington, DC 20231.

By:



Design Patent Application of:

Inventor: Robert J. Mehmen

Attorney Docket No.: 10968.86881

Title: DRAWER LATCH

- New U.S. Utility Patent Application Under 37 CFR 1.53(b) Transmittal
- Specification (13 Pages including specification, 7 claims and abstract)
- Executed Declaration and Power of Attorney - 2 pages
- Drawings - Informal - 4 pages
- Filing Fee Check - \$690.00
- Return Receipt Postcard

SPECIFICATION

Attorney Docket No. 10968.86881

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

5 Be it known that **Robert J. Mehmen**, a citizen of the United States and a resident of Shell
Rock, Iowa, have invented certain new and useful improvements in a

DRAWER LATCH

of which the following is a specification.



Banner & Witcoff, Ltd.
10 S. Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60606
312/715-1000

Attorney Docket No. 10968.86881

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In a principal aspect, the present invention relates to a latch mechanism for retaining a drawer mounted on telescopic slides in a cabinet. Mechanics' cabinets and tool cabinets typically are fabricated from sheet metal and include a cabinet enclosure with drawers mounted on telescoping slides. A typical example of such a construction is depicted in U.S. Patent No. _____ and U.S. Patent No. _____ which are incorporated herewith by reference.

Typically, in order to provide security for the contents within the cabinet drawers, a locking system is provided. The locking system will normally include a key actuated mechanism which enables locking the drawers in a closed position. Actuation or release of the key operated mechanism is necessary in order to release or unlock the drawers.

In addition to permanently locking the drawers in a closed position, it is also appropriate and desirable to provide a means by which the drawers will remain or be retained in a closed position unless positively opened by the mechanic or user of the cabinet. This is a desirable feature in a cabinet construction in order to preclude accidental opening of drawers thereby resulting in an unbalanced condition that would cause the cabinet to turn over due to the weight of tools and other items in the drawers acting as a cantilever weight causing the cabinet to tip. Additionally, it is desirable to provide a positive mechanism to maintain the drawers in a closed position so that the drawers will not accidentally open when the cabinet is, for example, being transported from one position to another. Also, it is desirable to keep the drawers in a closed, but not necessarily locked, position so that the drawers will not protrude unexpectedly or undesirably thereby posing a danger.

Thus, there has developed a need to provide a mechanism that is inexpensive, yet reliable, and which enables unlocked drawers to remain in the closed position unless positively opened. Certain mechanisms of this nature are depicted in the prior art. For example, U.S. Patent No. _____ depicts a catch mechanism which maintains or holds a drawer in a closed position in a cabinet enclosure. The catch relies upon the elastomeric characteristics of the catch. In the event the elastomer material fails, however, the catch then fails. Thus, there has developed a need for an improved latch or safety catch mechanism for drawers which are not maintained in the locked position.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly, the present invention comprises a latch mechanism for a sliding drawer mounted in a cabinet supported by telescoping slides. The latch mechanism is attached to the front side of the sliding drawer and includes a handle which extends over the front edge of the front side of the drawer as well as a section depending from the front edge and extending into the interior of the cabinet. Catch members are attached to the ends of the handle on the inside of the drawer and a biasing mechanism, such as a coil spring, biases the handle member so that the catch members are biased upwardly into position for engagement with strikes located on the inside of the cabinet enclosure adjacent the top front edge of the cabinet drawer when the drawer is in the closed position.

5 The handle also includes tabs which interlock and engage the handle with the front panel or front side of the cabinet drawer.

10 By positioning the catch members at the opposite ends of the handle and between the front sides of the drawer, lateral movement of the handle is precluded thereby maintaining the handle in a stable yet pivotal position on the front edge of the cabinet drawer. Strikes are included on a section

15 of each of the telescoping slides attached to the interior side wall of the cabinet.

Thus, it is an object of the invention to provide an improved latch mechanism which maintains sliding drawers in a cabinet in a closed position.

A further object of the invention is to provide a latch mechanism which is rugged, comprised of a very few number of parts, and which must be positively actuated in order to effect opening of

20 a drawer.

Yet another object of the invention is to provide a latch mechanism which may be incorporated in the front handle of a drawer and which will automatically hold the drawer in a closed position when the drawer is moved to that closed position.

These and other objects, advantages and features of the invention is set forth in the detailed description which follows.

REED & STERNBERG, ATTORNEYS

Banner & Witcoff, Ltd.
10 S. Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60606
312/715-1000

Attorney Docket No. 10968.86881

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

In the detailed description which follows reference will be made to the drawing comprised of the following figures:

Figure 1 is an isometric view of a typical cabinet having a construction which incorporates

5 the latch mechanism of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a side cross sectional view of the latch mechanism as incorporated in a drawer depicting the latch mechanism in the closed or locked, as well as the open, or released position;

Figure 3 is an exploded enlarged isometric view of the latch mechanism depicted as detail 3 in Figure 1;

10 **Figure 4** is an enlarged isometric view of the strike portion of the latch mechanism of the invention as depicted at detail 4 in Figure 1; and

Figure 5 is a cross sectional view of the assembly depicting the latch mechanism taken along the line 5--5 in Figure 1.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to the drawings, a cabinet 10 includes a first lateral sidewall 12 and a second lateral sidewall 14 parallel to and spaced from wall 12. The walls 12 and 14 in combination with the other walls and braces forming the cabinet define an enclosure 16. A first telescopic slide 20 is attached 5 to the inside of lateral wall or side 12. A second telescopic slide 22 is attached to the opposite lateral side or wall 14. The telescopic slides 20 and 22 include multiple sections such as sections 24, 26 and 28 of slide 20. The slides, such as slide 20, are affixed to the lateral sidewalls 12, 14 by interengagement of appropriate tabs, tangs and slots in a manner known to those of ordinary skill in the art. The telescopic sections 24, 26 and 28 slide with respect to one another again in a manner 10 known to those of ordinary skill in the art. Section 24 is maintained fixed within the enclosure 16 defined by the cabinet 10. The slide 22 comprises a mirror image of the slide 20.

The slides 20 and 22 together support a single drawer 30 which includes a back wall or back side 32, a first lateral side wall 34, and a second, parallel spaced lateral side 36, as well as a front side wall 38. The drawer 30 is supported by the telescopic section, such as telescopic section 28, 15 which is affixed to drawer side wall 34 by means of interengagement of tabs or projections with slots, again in the manner known to those of ordinary skill in the art. Positioning of the slides 20 and 22 is effected so that the drawer 30 will efficiently and effectively slide into and out of the cabinet 10. Slides 20, 22 extend along the top edge of the drawer 30.

The subject matter of the invention relates, in particular, to a front handle 40 which includes 20 a latch mechanism for maintaining the drawer 30 in a closed position except when the handle 40 is

appropriately actuated to release the drawer 30 from the closed position. The mechanism for effecting such retention is depicted in greater detail in Figures 2-5. Thus, the front side wall 38 of the drawer 30 includes a top edge 44 which, in the embodiment depicted, comprises a horizontal run 46 extending from a vertical front face or run 48 defining the front side wall 38. The horizontal run 46 extends outwardly from the interior of the drawer 30. The run 46 extends between the lateral sides 44 and 36. A series of horizontal slots 50 are provided in face 48 adjacent the upper edge 44 in the front side wall 38.

The handle or handle member 40 includes a horizontal run 52 which typically fits against the run 46. Downwardly depending decorative and protective edge 54 connects with the run 52 on the outside of the drawer 30. Depending vertically downward from the run 52 is a downward run 56 which extends on the inside of the drawer 30 spaced inwardly from the front side wall 38. At strategic positions along the width of the downwardly depending front run 56 are a series of notched tabs 58 which are designed to fit through the horizontal openings 50 in face 48.

Catch members 60 and 62 are positioned at the opposite ends on the lateral sides of the run 56. The catch members 60, 62 comprise vertical plates attached to the downwardly depending run 56. Each catch member 60, 62 includes an upwardly extending tab or tang 64. The catch members 60 and 62 are positioned on the inside of the walls or lateral sides 34 and 36, respectively. Thus, the catch members 60 and 62 preclude lateral or side to side movement of the handle 40 when the assembly comprising the handle 40 is in position. Spring members, such as coil springs 66, are positioned intermediate the run 56 and the wall 38 to bias the handle 40 in the counterclockwise

direction in Figure 2 thereby positioning the catch members 60 and 62 in an extended counterclockwise position, or locking or closed position.

Strikes or strike members 70, 72 are constructed for cooperation with the catch members 60 and 62 respectively and are attached as an integral part of the telescoping slides 20 and 22. Thus,
5 the strike member 70 is a component part of the section 24 of the telescopic slide 20. The strikes 70, 72 comprise a horizontal plate with a strike passage 76 defined in the plate for receipt of a catch tab 64 as depicted in Figure 2.

Thus, in operation, the drawer 30 is moved to the closed position by pushing the drawer 30 into the enclosure 16 of the cabinet 10. This causes the telescopic slide members 20 and 22 to telescope to the closed position. The locking tab 64 as associated with each catch 60, 62 will then ride into the opening 76. It is to be noted that there is a ramp or cam surface 78 on each of the catch members 60 and 62. The cam surface 78 engages against the front edge 80 of the strikes 70 and 72 forcing the handle 40 to pivot against the biasing force of the spring 66 about the top edge 46 of wall 38 until the catch 60, 62 is biased in the counterclockwise direction to fit into the opening 76. In the
10 position depicted in Figure 2, in solid lines, the drawer 30 is maintained in the closed and locked position. To release the drawer 30 one must manually engage the handle 40 and pivot the handle about the top edge 46 against the biasing force of the spring 66 to the position depicted in phantom
15 in Figure 2. This enables the drawer 30 to be released and the telescopic members 20 and 22 then permit the drawer 30 to be withdrawn from the enclosure 16.

The construction of the present invention has various advantages. Positive holding of the drawer in the closed position is effected. The drawer may be opened by easy manual operation. Because the handle 40 extends across the entire front face of the drawer, positioning and engaging the handle 40 is easily accomplished. Because of the manner in which the component parts are interengaged, the handle 40 remains locked or fixed in position pivotally on the top edge of the drawer 30, yet cannot be removed from the drawer 30. Additionally, because there are catch members 60, 62 on each side of the drawer 30, the drawer 30 cannot be easily skewed and there is positive locking.

The particular shape of the catch members 60, 62 may be altered in order to adjust the force of the engagement of the catch member 60, 62 and the strike 70, 72. Also, the part defining the strike 70, 72 and the part defining the catch member 60, 62 may have a reversed shape configuration. That is, the strike opening 76 may be positioned in place of the catch member 60 and vice versa. Thus, there may be a reversal of component parts in order to effect the locking operation. Various other modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. The invention is, therefore, to be limited only by the following claims and equivalents thereof.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A latch mechanism for a sliding drawer mounted in a cabinet and supported by telescoping slides, said drawer including a front side wall with a top edge and lateral side walls, said telescoping slides attached to the lateral side walls of the drawer, said latch mechanism comprising in combination:

5 a drawer handle including a plate riding on the top edge of the drawer and pivotal about the top edge between a first position and a second position;

said plate projecting into the drawer from the front edge and including a catch member attached to the plate inside the drawer, said catch member including a catch tab projecting generally transverse to the direction of drawer slide movement;

10 means for biasing said plate and catch member about the edge; and

a strike mounted on the inside of the cabinet at the front opening adjacent the drawer top edge when the drawer is closed, said strike positioned for engagement by the biased catch member, and disengaged therefrom when the handle is manually pivoted about the top edge against the force of the means for biasing.

2. The mechanism of claim 1 including a strike attached to the telescoping slide.

3. The mechanism of claim 1 including first and second catch members attached to the handle adjacent respectively the lateral sidewallls of the drawer, said first and catch members positioned on the inside of the drawer to retain the handle from lateral sliding movement.

4. The mechanism of claim 1 wherein the handle includes a depending run extending from the plate on the inside of the drawer, said depending run hingedly connected to the front side of the drawer.

5. The latch mechanism of claim 1 wherein said slides comprise a first wall attachment section and at least one telescoping section, said telescoping section being attached to the lateral side walls of the drawer, said first wall attachment section including said strike projecting therefrom.

6. The latch mechanism of claim 1 wherein the handle extends along the full front side wall of the drawer.

7. The latch mechanism of claim 1 including at least one interlocking tab for attaching the plate to the front side wall of the drawer.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A lock mechanism for a sliding drawer of the type mounted on telescopic slides in a cabinet includes a pivotal handle bar on the top front edge of the cabinet drawer front wall. The handle includes catch mechanisms biased for engagement with a strike extending from the drawer slides 5 mounted on the inside of the cabinet. Manual rotation of the handle moves the handle and thus the catch mechanisms out of engagement with the strike enabling the cabinet drawer to be opened.

FIG. 1

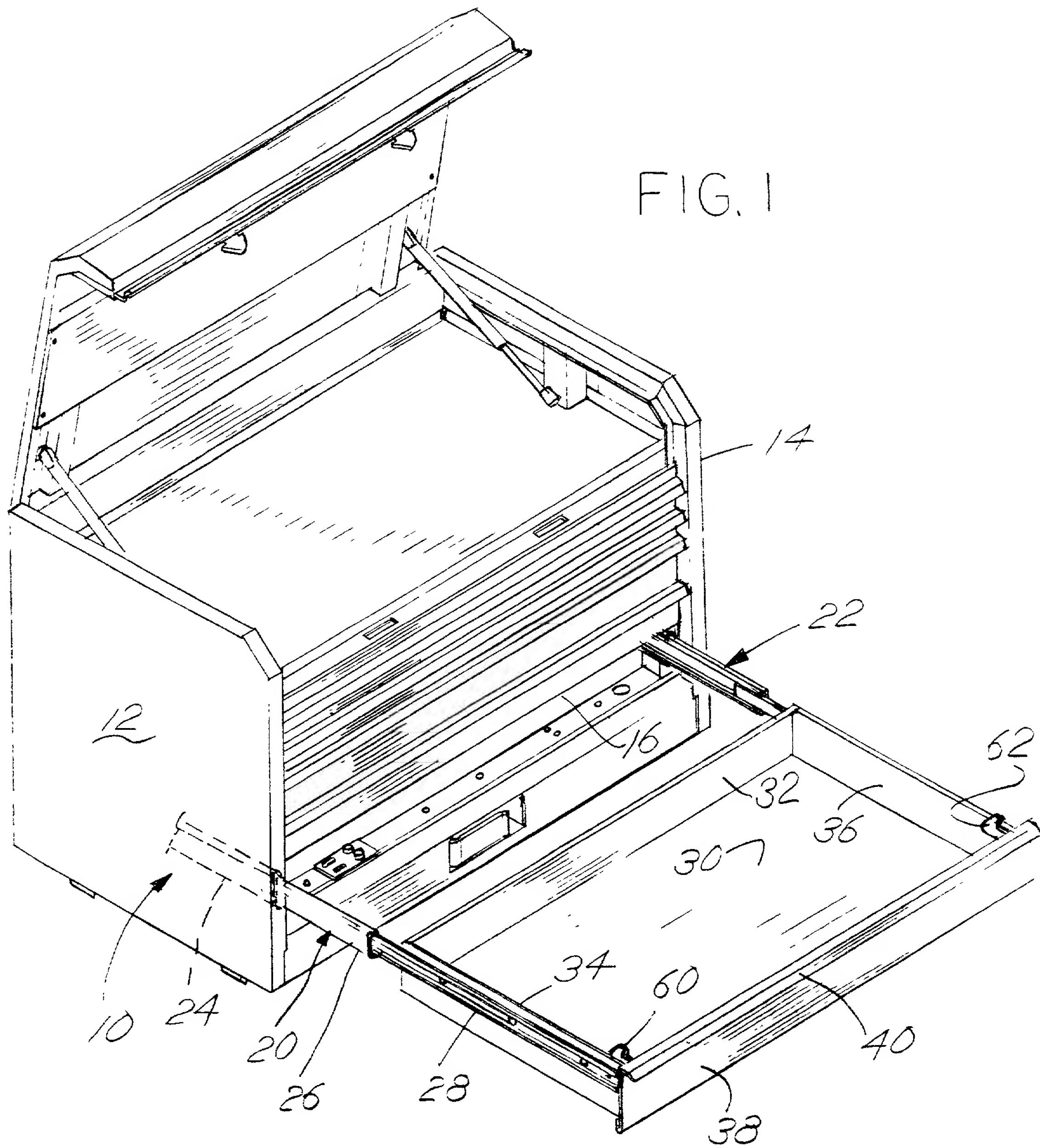


FIG. 2

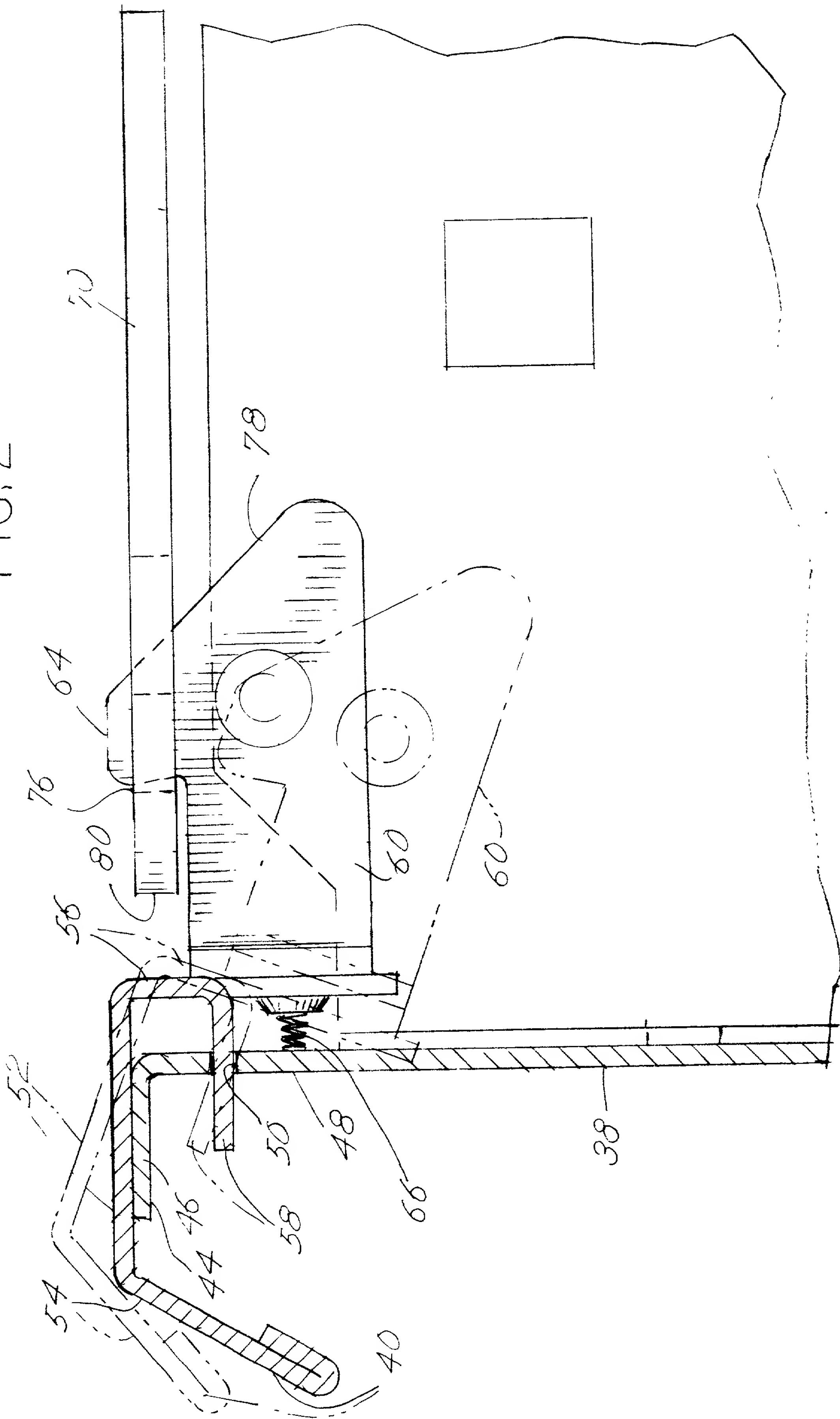


FIG. 2

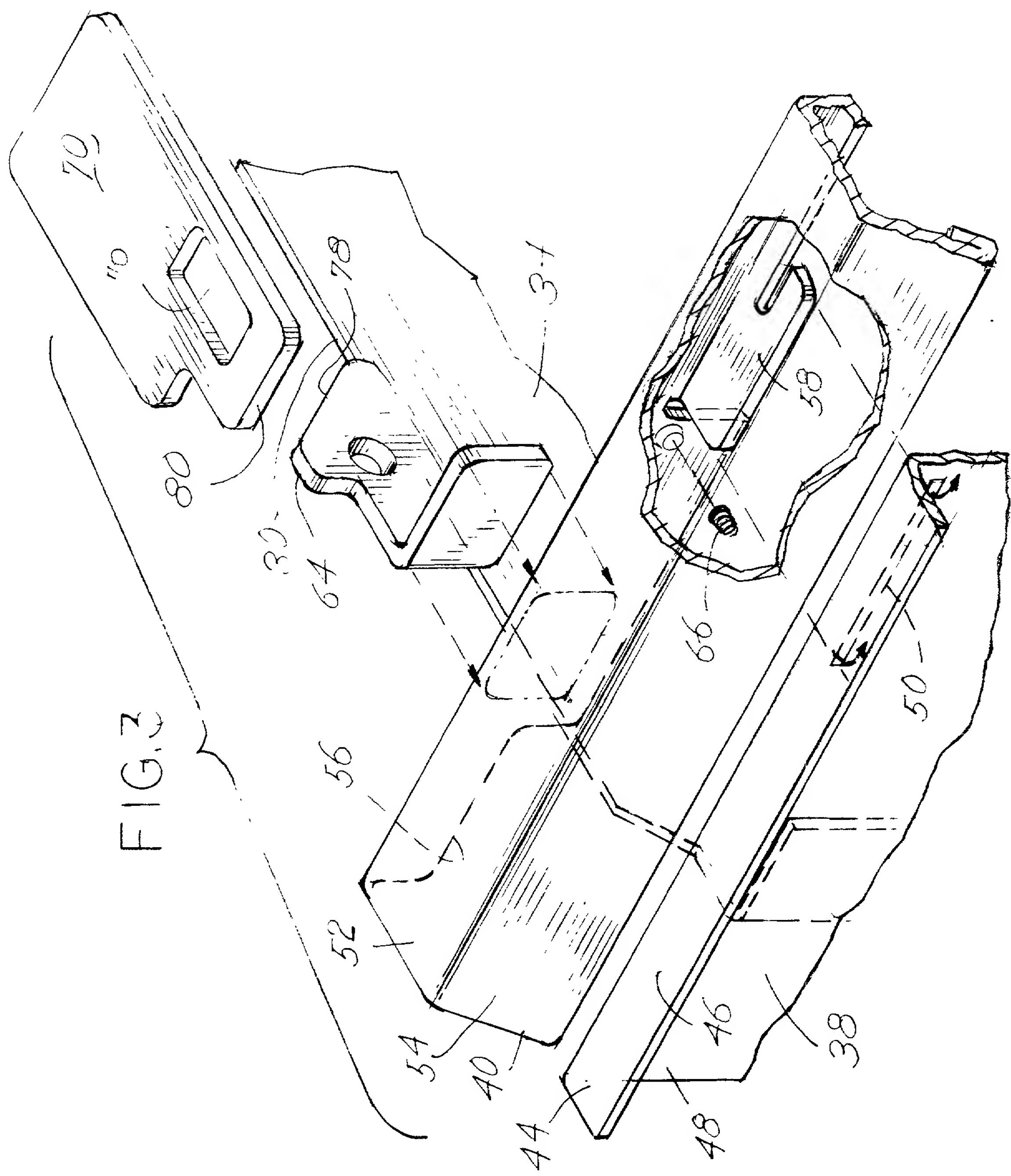


FIG.4

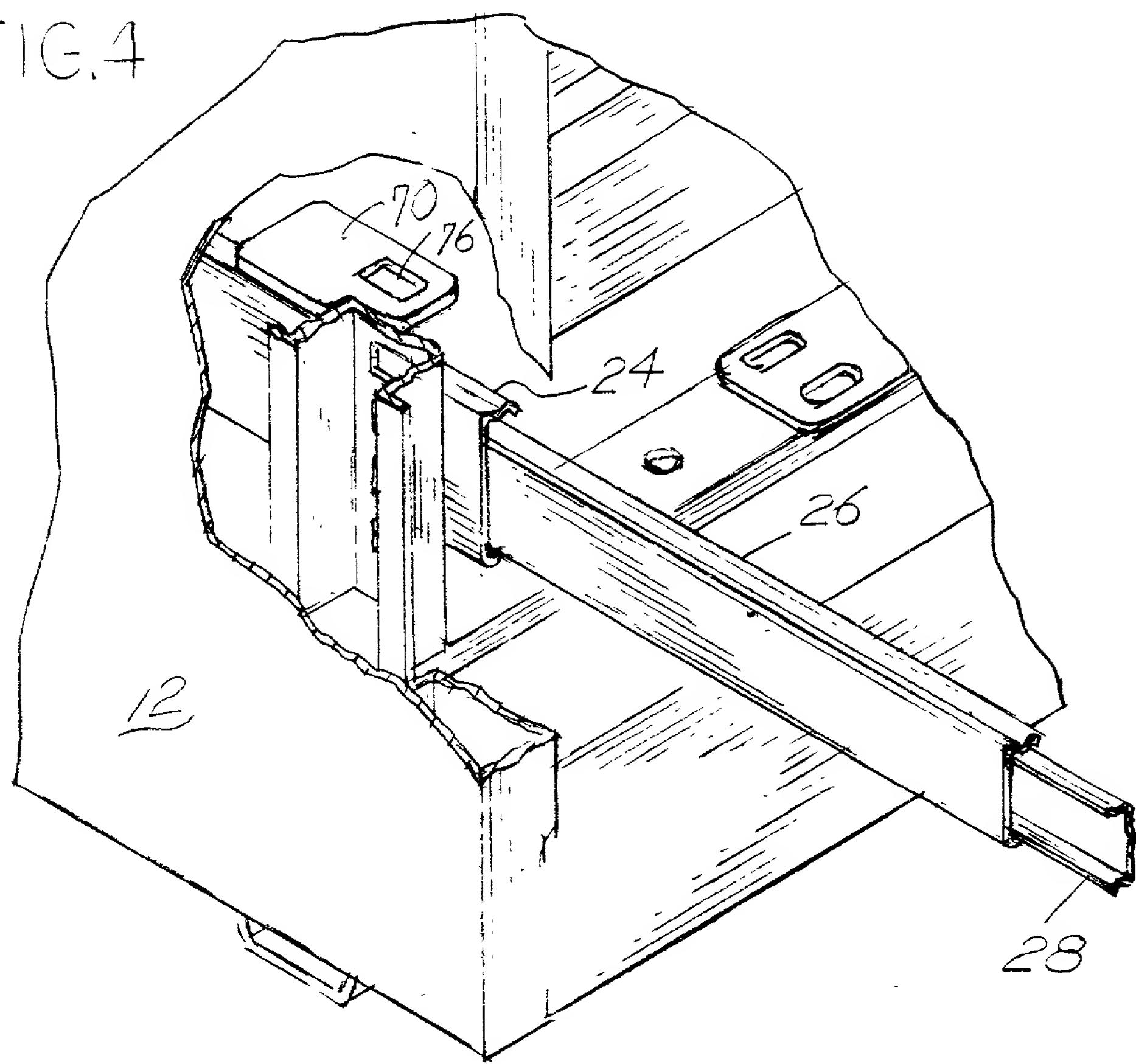
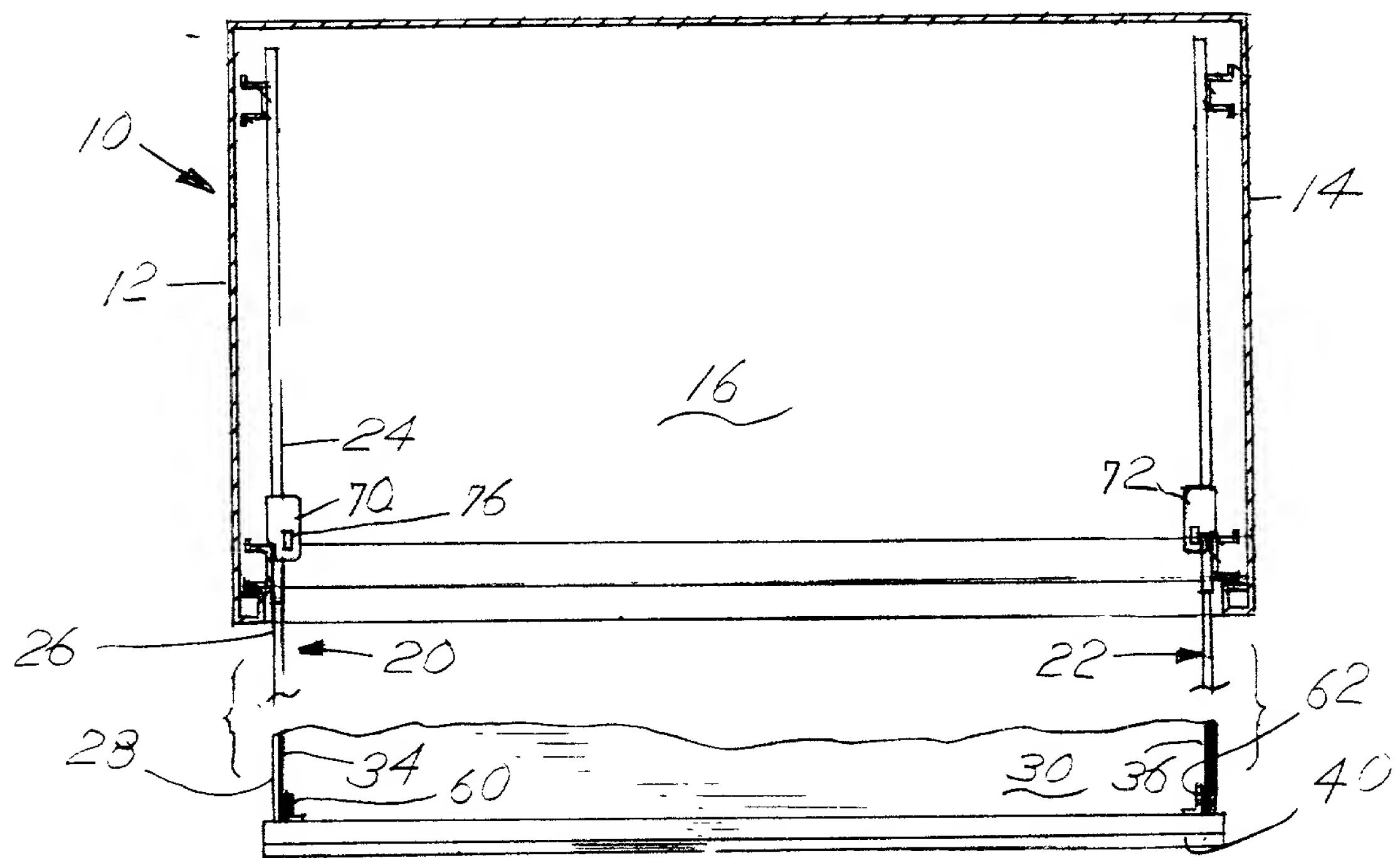


FIG 5



SOLE DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As the below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name;

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled **DRAWER LATCH**, the specification of which

- is attached hereto.
- was filed on _____ as Application Serial Number _____ and was amended on _____
(if applicable).
- was filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and accorded International Application No. _____, filed _____, and amended on _____ (if any).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I hereby acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to patentability in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a).

Prior Foreign Application(s)

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Country	Application No.	Date of Filing (day month year)	Date of Issue (day month year)	Priority Claimed Under 35 U.S.C. §119

Prior United States Provisional Application(s)

I hereby claim priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, §119(e)(1) of any U.S. provisional application listed below:

U.S. Provisional Application No.	Date of Filing (day month year)	Priority Claimed Under 35 U.S.C. §119(e)(1)

Prior United States Application(s)

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, §120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, §112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, §1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

Application Serial No.	Date of Filing (Day, Month, Year)	Status — Patented, Pending, Abandoned

Power of Attorney

And I hereby appoint, both jointly and severally, as my attorneys with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected herewith the following attorneys and agents, their registration numbers being listed after their names:

ALTHERR, Robert F.	31,810	HONG, Patricia E.	34,373	PATEL, Binal J.	42,065
BANNER, Donald W.	17,037	HOSCHEIT, Dale H.	19,090	PATHAK, Ajay S.	38,266
BANNER, Mark T	29,888	IWANICKI, John P.	34,628	PAYNE, Stephen S.	35,316
BANNER, Pamela I.	33,644	JACKSON, Thomas H.	29,808	PETERSON, Thomas L.	30,969
BECKETT, William W.	18,262	KAGAN, Sarah A.	32,141	POTENZA, Joseph M.	28,175
BODNER, Jordan	42,338	KATZ, Robert S.	36,402	PRATT, Thomas K.	37,210
BUROW, Scott A.	42,373	KLEIN, William J.	43,719	RENK, Christopher J.	33,761
CALLAHAN, James V.	20,095	KRAUSE, Joseph P.	32,578	RESIS, Robert H.	32,168
CHANG, Steve S	42,402	LINEK, Ernest V.	29,822	RIVARD, Paul M.	43,446
COHAN, Gregory J.	40,959	MAGOON, Sumeet	43,769	ROLLINS, John F.	38,013
COOPERMAN, Marc S.	34,143	MALONE, Dale A.	32,155	SCHAD, Steve P.	32,550
CURTIN, Joseph P.	34,571	MANNAVA, Ashok K.	P45,301	SHANAHAN, Michael H.	24,438
DAWSON, John R.	39,504	McDERMOTT, Peter D.	29,411	SHIFLEY, Charles W.	28,042
DEMOOR, Laura J.	39,654	McKEE, Christopher L.	32,384	SKERPON, Joseph M.	29,864
EVANS, Thomas L.	35,805	McKIE, Edward F.	17,335	SPAR, Elizabeth	45,123
FEDOROCHKO, Gary D.	35,509	MEDLOCK, Nina L.	29,673	STOCKLEY, D. J.	34,257
FISHER, Daniel E.	34,162	MEECE, Timothy C.	38,553	VAN ES, J. Pieter	37,746
FISHER, William J.	32,133	MEEKER, Frederic M.	35,282	WILLIAMS, Kathleen M.	34,380
GLEMBOCKI, Christopher R.	38,800	MILLER, Charles L	43,805	WITCOFF, Sheldon W.	17,399
HANLON, Brian E.	40,449	MITRIUS, Janice V.	43,808	WOLFF, Kevin A.	42,233
HART, Robert P.	35,184	MORENO, Christopher P.	38,566	WOLFFE, Franklin D.	19,724
HEMMENDINGER, Lisa M.	42,653	NELSON, Jon O.	24,566	WOLFFE, Susan A.	33,568
HILLMAN, Lisa	43,673	NIEGOWSKI, James A.	28,331	WRIGHT, Bradley C.	38,061

All correspondence and telephone communications should be addressed to:

Banner & Witcoff, Ltd.

Ten South Wacker Drive, Suite 3000
Chicago, IL 60606-7407

Customer Number: 22908

Tel: (312) 715-1000

Fax: (312) 715-1234

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

Signature Robert J. Mehmen Date 5/9/00
Full Name of Sole Inventor Mehmen First Given Name Robert Second Given Name J.
Family Name
Residence 25757 Union Avenue, Shell Rock, Iowa, 50670 Citizenship United States
Post Office Address 25757 Union Avenue, Shell Rock, Iowa, 50670